

There is not only a deficiency of health care for children, but also a disproportionate lack of health care for minorities. The disparities in health care leave too many minority communities with a health system that is separate and unequal.

An additional 9 million Americans have recently joined the ranks of the uninsured. The cost of health care now causes a bankruptcy in America every 30 seconds. By the end of the year, it could cause 1.5 million Americans to lose their homes. For some with insurance any accident, illness, divorce, or the loss of a job will torpedo them to being one of the nearly 46 million uninsured or the millions who have health care, but really can't afford what they've got. Children and people of color are particularly vulnerable, but they are only part of a much larger picture of those in the United States without health insurance.

There are many incremental approaches to improved health care, which include a patients' bill of rights, small increases in the number of children covered under special state-run programs and Medicare coverage for prescription drugs. I support all of these improvements, but they are a long way from what the American people deserve, what the American economy can afford, and what political leaders ought to be fighting for. We should continue to fight for all of these advances, and a constitutional amendment guaranteeing every American health care of equal high quality.

### **States Children's Health Insurance Program**

Democrats in Congress and President Obama provided a large investment on children's health by enacting the [Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization](#) into law on February 4, 2009. The program currently provides health insurance for more than 7 million children, but this legislation will protect coverage for those children and expand it to include an additional 4 million children who would otherwise be uninsured. The reauthorization of the [SCHIP](#)

program presents an historic opportunity to put an end to the morally unacceptable fact that nine million American children live every day without insurance.

### **Medicare/Medicaid**

Congress is working to maintain Medicare's commitment to insure our seniors and reverse harmful cuts proposed by the Bush Administration. President Barack Obama announced today that states will be able to access the first two quarters of Federal Medical Assistance Percentage funding (FMAP) starting this Wednesday, February 25. FMAP - the federal match for Medicaid - helps pay for health care for the families struggling during the economic crisis and some of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. More than 49 million Americans rely on Medicaid for health care coverage and this funding could help 20 million more Americans get covered.

### Health Care Reform

The Obama-Biden plan provides affordable, accessible health care for all Americans, builds on the existing health care system, and uses existing providers, doctors, and plans. Under the Obama-Biden plan, patients will be able to make health care decisions with their doctors, instead of being blocked by insurance company bureaucrats. I support President Obama 100% in his efforts to reform our health care system. I agree that our health care system needs a complete overhaul and I am eager to help produce legislation to assist the President in this endeavor.

### Stem Cell Research

More than 100 million Americans suffer from cancer, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, spinal cord injuries and other debilitating diseases and disorders for which embryonic stem cell research holds great promise in finding new and better treatments and cures. In June, 2007, the House passed legislation to expand the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research by lifting the restrictions on the embryonic stem cell lines that can be used for federally-funded research, which was vetoed by President Bush. Yet, President Obama made an [executive order](#) March 9, 2009 removing barriers to responsible scientific research involving human stem cells.

- "Medical miracles do not happen simply by accident. They result from painstaking and costly research - from years of lonely trial and error, much of which never bears fruit - and from a government willing to support that work. From life-saving vaccines, to pioneering cancer treatments, to the sequencing of the human genome - that is the story of scientific progress in America. When government fails to make these investments, opportunities are missed. Promising avenues go unexplored. Some of our best scientists leave for other countries that will sponsor their work. And those countries may surge ahead of ours in the advances that transform our lives."

President Barack Obama